

Remarks

The Office Action mailed April 10, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-50 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-50 stand rejected.

The rejection of Claims 1-50 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,665,822 to Conway is respectfully traversed.

Conway describes networking equipment that is coupled to a mail server (column 5, lines 7-10). The networking equipment includes a fan, a networking server, a router, a backplane switch, an alarm card, and a power supply (column 5, lines 10-13). The components within the networking equipment are coupled together through the backplane switch (column 5, lines 14-16). A system management software resides within the networking server and functions to send an email message to the mail server upon detection of a problem with one or more of the components of the networking equipment (column 5, lines 22-26). Notably, Conway does not describe or suggest an e-mail system electrically connected to an ACM and that is configured to automatically control at least one device without user intervention. Rather, Applicants submit that Conway describes a field availability monitoring system (FAMS) that “sends an email message to the user system for viewing and analysis.” (Col. 5, lines 49-50) Conway further describes that:

[t]he viewed information may be used for assessing the quality of various parts and for identifying common problems associated with particular components allowing improvement of system performance by the elimination of frequently faulty components.

(Col. 5, lines 59-64) Applicants submit that sending an email to a user so that the user can selectively view information to assess the quality of parts and identify common problems does not describe nor suggest an e-mail system that is configured to *automatically control at least one device without user intervention*.

Claim 1 recites an e-mail-enabled automation control module (ACM) system comprising “an ACM . . . an e-mail system electrically connected to said ACM that is

configured to automatically control at least one device without user intervention and that is coupled to a backplane, said e-mail system configured to perform at least one of sending e-mail messages from said ACM through a network, and receiving e-mail messages from the network.”

Conway does not describe nor suggest an e-mail-enabled automation control module (ACM) system as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, Conway does not describe nor suggest an e-mail-enabled ACM system including an e-mail system electrically connected to an ACM that is configured to automatically control at least one device without user intervention, as is recited in Claim 1. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Conway merely describes a mail server coupled to networking equipment that emails information to a monitor to be viewed and analyzed. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Conway.

Claims 2-11 and 47-50 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2-11 and 47-50 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 2-11 and 47-50 likewise are patentable over Conway.

Claim 12 recites a method for management and control of a first automation control module (ACM), the first ACM including an e-mail system electrically connected to the first ACM and a network, wherein the method comprises “sending e-mail messages from the first ACM through the network using the e-mail system . . . receiving e-mail messages from the network using the e-mail system . . . requesting, by the first ACM, information via the e-mail system from a second ACM, wherein the first ACM automatically controls a device without user intervention and is coupled to a backplane.”

Conway does not describe nor suggest a method for management and control of a first automation control module (ACM) as is recited in Claim 12. More specifically, Conway does not describe nor suggest a method including requesting, by a first ACM, information via an e-mail system from a second ACM, wherein the first ACM automatically controls a device without user intervention, as is recited in Claim 12. Rather, in contrast to the present

invention, Conway merely describes a mail server coupled to networking equipment that emails information to a monitor to be viewed and analyzed. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 12 is submitted to be patentable over Conway.

Claims 13-22 depend from independent Claim 12. When the recitations of Claims 13-22 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 12, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 13-22 likewise are patentable over Conway.

Claim 23 recites a method for management and control of an automation control module (ACM) using an ACM system, the ACM system including a first ACM, a network, a general purpose computer electrically connected to the network, and an e-mail subsystem electrically connected to the first ACM and the network, wherein the method comprises “sending e-mail messages from the first ACM through the network to the general purpose computer using the e-mail subsystem . . . receiving e-mail messages from the general purpose computer through the network using the e-mail subsystem . . . requesting information via the e-mail subsystem from a second ACM, wherein said requesting information is performed by the first ACM that is configured to automatically control at least one device without user intervention and that is coupled to a backplane.”

Conway does not describe nor suggest a method for management and control of an automation control module (ACM) using an ACM system as is recited in Claim 23. More specifically, Conway does not describe nor suggest a method including requesting information via an e-mail subsystem from a second ACM, wherein requesting information is performed by a first ACM that is configured to automatically control at least one device without user intervention, as is recited in Claim 23. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Conway merely describes a mail server coupled to networking equipment that emails information to a monitor to be viewed and analyzed. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 23 is submitted to be patentable over Conway.

Claims 24-32 depend from independent Claim 23. When the recitations of Claims 24-32 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 23, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 24-32 likewise are patentable over Conway.

Claim 32 recites an automation control module (ACM) system comprising “an ACM . . . a network . . . a general purpose computer electrically connected to said network . . . an e-mail subsystem electrically connected to said network and said ACM, wherein said ACM is configured to automatically control at least one device without user intervention and is coupled to a backplane, said e-mail subsystem configured to perform at least one of sending e-mail messages from said ACM through said network to said general purpose computer and receiving e-mail messages from said general purpose computer through said network.”

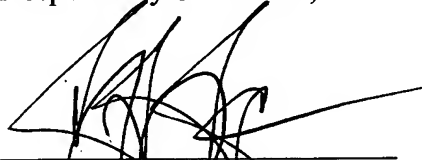
Conway does not describe nor suggest an automation control module (ACM) system as is recited in Claim 32. More specifically, Conway does not describe nor suggest an ACM that is configured to automatically control at least one device without user intervention, as is recited in Claim 32. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Conway merely describes a mail server coupled to networking equipment that emails information to a monitor to be viewed and analyzed. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 32 is submitted to be patentable over Conway.

Claims 33-46 depend from independent Claim 32. When the recitations of Claims 33-46 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 32, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 33-46 likewise are patentable over Conway.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1-50 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Robert B. Reeser III', written over a horizontal line.

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